

STEVENSON'S BLOCKS

PRECIOUS RELICS GIVEN TO THE BOSTON LIBRARY.

Curious Wood Cuts Made by the Novelist—Printed with Remarkable Series of Verses—Author's Early Life.

From the Boston Herald.

To the treasures of the Boston public library there is about to be added a collection of precious literary relics in the form of a series of woodcuts engraved by the late Robert Louis Stevenson.

Of all the curiosities of literature, none is more remarkable than the series of verses composed by Robert Louis Stevenson at Davos, Switzerland, during the winters of 1880-82, and printed, along with wood cuts of his own making, by himself and his young stepson. These were "published" in pamphlet form by "S. L. Osbourne & Co." Of the original impressions very few are known to exist. A complete set is in the possession of the British Museum. The "Davy" volume (No. 2) of the Edinburgh edition of Stevenson's works, of which only 1005 (numbered) copies were issued, contains facsimiles of the Davos publications, the illustrations being printed from the original blocks.

Stevenson went to Davos, an Alpine village, as he went to many other places in his life, in quest of health, or of relief from his almost incessant illness and pain. He was accompanied by Mrs. Stevenson and her son, Lloyd Osbourne, then a boy, who afterward collaborated with his stepfather, in the production of "The Wreckers."

Stevenson was always fond of children—was a child himself, indeed, in some respects, to the end of his days. During the long and rigorous Swiss winters he and young Osbourne entertained themselves together, without doubt, in the most delightful manner, by setting up a little printing press and going into the publishing business in a small way. The man did most of the writing and all of the engraving, and the boy attended to the press work.

The Davos series, as reproduced in the Edinburgh edition, begins with a circular announcing the publication of "Black Canyon; or, Wild Adventures in the Far West," an instructive and amusing tale, written by Samuel Lloyd Osbourne. At the end of the circular is this "notice":

"Black Canyon" is a pamphlet of eight pages, about 4 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches, containing a burlesque Indian story in seven chapters.

The second product of the Davos press was "Not I and Other Poems," by Robert Louis Stevenson, author of "The Blue Bird," "Travel with Donkey," etc. This volume is of the same size as "Black Canyon." The last of the "Other Poems" is a combined apology and "ad." In these words:

The pamphlet here presented was written by a printer uneducated, a bard with all decay.

The author and the printer, with various kinds of skill, connected it in winter, at Davos on the hills.

They burned the night taper, but now the work is done, and the book is ready.

Observe the costly paper, Remark the perfect type.

At Davos on the hills.

The next thing got out by "S. L. Osbourne & Co." was a 12-page pamphlet, a burlesque of the "Moral Emblems," a collection of cuts and verses, by Robert Louis Stevenson, author of "The Blue Bird," etc. It contained five of the "Moral Emblems," each being a rude picture with explanatory rhymes on the opposite page. Here is the first one:

See how the children in the print Round on the book to see what's left!

O, like these pretty babes, may you Grow and apply this volume true!

And while your eyes upon the cuts With harmless error open and shut,

Reader, may your immortal mind To their sage lessons not be blind.

A second volume of "Moral Emblems" was published. Four more of them are reproduced below.

Read—gazing on untrodden lands, The fortunate advent of the sun;

While in the heavens above no head, The eagle seeks its daily bread.

How justly fast to feet and feet, Heroes and eagles, hills and seas,

Look on this emblem and be brave.

How pathetic was this allusion to the cut finger of the author—engraver! The reader may find the "Moral Emblems" as a long white line in the lower right-hand portion of the cut.

The Davos blocks have left the hands of the Edinburgh printer, and are probably now on their way to Boston.

It was a Slender.

A story is told by the Army and Navy Journal of one of our volunteer warriors who had his home in a small town on the Mississippi river, and who had been chosen to command the local company because of his political influence.

The ladies of his town had organized a Red Cross Auxiliary Society, and among other contributions to the comfort of their absent heroes was a case of home made pajamas. The box containing these was sent to the camp, but no acknowledgment or receipt was returned, so the good ladies telegraphed:

"Seems to know if you got those pajamas last week."

Now the captain had been sitting up with the boys the night before, and when the dispatch was handed to him he was trying to reduce his swollen head with a wet towel, and his mind was somewhat confused. So the ladies of the relief society were astonished by the receipt of this dispatch:

"Story is a lie out of whole cloth, probably made up by my enemies to ruin my politically. Admit it's not a total abstainer, but never had the pajamas last week or at any other time."

Correction Due.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

"I see," said the farmer, "that you have me wrote up as the proud father of a new girl."

"Yes," said the editor of the country paper, "visions of fat chickens and apples by the bushel floating before his mental vision."

"Seems to me," continued the farmer, "that 'resigned' would have been a better word than 'proud.' She's the ninth."

Not Quite Certain.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Yes, Eddie was slightly wounded in the first fight. We have a letter from the regimental surgeon."

"Where was he wounded?"

"We are not quite sure. The surgeon mentioned the place, but we don't know whether it is an anatomical phrase or a Filipino tongue."

Our Growing Language.

From the Indianapolis Journal.

"What," asked the intelligent foreigner, "do you mean by saying that one man overshadows another?"

"It means," answered the obliging native, "that he outshines him."

Following the "Moral Emblems" there came a booklet entitled "The Graver and the Pen," or Sentences from Nature, with Appropriate verses by Robert Louis Stevenson, etc. This was compiled at Davos, but

was published in Edinburgh for the reason that it is set forth at the foot of the title page—namely: "It was only by the kindness of Mr. T. W. of King's College that we are able to issue this little work, having already exhausted our own resources."



lowed us to print with his own press when ours was broken."

Three of the articles in "The Graver and the Pen" are here reproduced.

THE PRECARIOUS MILL.

Along above the stream it stands, The topsy-turvy, tumble-down, The habitation of the mill.

Still as the ringing saws advance To allow the humming deal, All day the miller merrily hears The thunder of the wheel.

He hears the river plough and roar As round the saws they move, He feels the solid building quake, The trusty timbers throb.

All night beside the fire he cowers:

THE TRAMPS.

Now long enough has day endured, Or King Apollo painting team, Seaward he steers his painting team.

THE FOLLYHARDY GEOGRAPHER.

The twinkling desert miles around, The twinkling desert miles around, The twinkling desert miles around.

And cast on earth his latest gleam.

But see! The tramps with laden eye

Long through the hills they way they took, Long through the hills they way they took, Long through the hills they way they took.

They pass upon the downward slope, And as their shining heads are bent, Their shining heads are bent.

So passed the tramp on the Alps, And e'er he reached the Roman camp, And e'er he reached the Roman camp.

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A COUNTESS CHAPERON

HOW PAULINE ASTOR IS BEING COACHED FOR SOCIETY.

The Countess of Selkirk is Paid \$15,000 a Year for Preparing the Great American Heiress for English Society.

From the New York Journal.

William Waldorf Astor, who spends the greatest of New York fortunes in England and has just come here for a few weeks to dodge taxes, has engaged the Countess of Selkirk as chaperon for his only daughter, Pauline. To use plain American language,

which even young women of the best society are liable.

What She Will Be Taught.

Miss Astor will learn to enter and leave a carriage in the proper manner, a difficult art to acquire.

The countess will overlook her correspondence, and make the forms so desirable acquaintances. She will also overlook her charge's sports and amusements. She will take care that Miss Astor, while taking as much exercise as she may need for her health, shall not become so devoted to athletic sports as to unfit her for the drawing room.

A difficult part of the countess's duties will be to instruct Miss Astor in the art of making little public speeches. Every lady of great rank or wealth in England is called upon to do this with much frequency.

conversations or to distribute prizes to firemen, school girls and other deserving persons.

The young American Duchess, who is to be married to the Duke of Devonshire, was required to do this soon after her arrival in England, and although under 21 years of age acquitted herself with great credit.

Miss Astor will undoubtedly be required to make prize distributing business, and to make a speech at the coronation of the king.

The speeches required on these occasions are not at all difficult to make, but they must be delivered easily, pleasantly and without any outburst of emotion.

It is not every man who can make a "little speech" in this manner, even to a table of intimate friends. How much more difficult must it be to address a crowd of local magnates or firemen or school teachers and children, all dressed in their best clothes, looking eagerly at your lips, and watching for any fancied slight?

After all, the final aim of the countess's training will be to enable Miss Astor to preside with grace and dignity at the head of a great house in London and in the country.

At present Miss Astor has two splendid homes in which to exercise her social talents. One is the Clarendon-on-the-Thames, a beautiful place which her father purchased from the Duke of Westminster. The other is a handsome house in London, a mansion greater than any in New York, which he bought from the Marquis of Lansdowne.

When Mr. Astor shook the dust of America off his feet, went to England, founded a Tory and cultivated such members of the nobility as he could, it was presumed he was striving for a prominent position in English society.

Some say that he has not succeeded. Others say that he is a recluse, and that he is not the man to succeed in the English society.

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